

REMARKS

Claims 1-8 are all the claims pending in the application.

Claims 1-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Buytaert (US 6,359,628) in view of Van De Velde (US 5,646,416). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection with the following comments.

The present invention relates to an image and information processor for images and information for medical treatment purposes, which is either a standalone device or connected to a network. In a preferred embodiment of the processor, images are processed in units of several or more images to be used in a single inspection. In the exemplary embodiment, serial radiography based on plural radiographic conditions of image capture information can be reserved as a single inspection. The order can be arranged such that image capture progresses to obtain images from less burdensome to more burdensome image capture parameters.

Buytaert relates to identification and preview of radiographic images that are stored in a photostimulable phosphor screen. As shown in FIG. 1 of the reference, Buytaert's system includes: a combined identification/preview station 1, a read-out station 2, a processing station 6 and a laser recorder 3 being interconnected through a network. In read-out station 2 the image stored in the photostimulable phosphor screen is read out and digitized and the digital signal representation of the radiographic image is subjected to image processing in processing station 6. The read out and processed image is then sent to laser recorder 3 to be reproduced. A connection to a hospital information system 9 is also provided.

Van De Velde relates to identification of a radiation image in a system for reading and processing a radiation image that has been stored in a photostimulable phosphor screen, said

system being installed in an environment, such as a hospital, wherein an information management system is already available.

Applicant submits that Buytaert fails to teach or suggest that the image information processing unit is constructed such that a serial radiography based on a plurality of radiographic conditions of the image capture information relating to one patient inputted by means of the input function can be reserved as a single inspection, as required by claims 1 and 8. In this regard, the Examiner refers to FIG. 5 of the reference as allegedly disclosing the aforementioned feature of the claim. FIG. 5 shows a preview screen of images. However, FIG. 5 is only a display of images, which fails to teach or suggest reserving a serial radiography as a single inspection. The number and arrangement of images displayed in the preview screen of FIG. 5 indicates nothing about having serial radiography based on conditions of image capture information. Rather, the images relate to an order in which images are read-out, which need not have any relation to capture conditions. Buytaert does not indicate that plural information can be reserved. On the contrary, FIG. 5 is simply a display of images without explanation of reservation or image capture information.

Moreover, the specification of Buytaert is silent with respect to the above-recited limitations of claims 1 and 8 of the present invention. What Buytaert discloses about the preview screen includes the following excerpt from col. 8, lines 40-51:

Different embodiments of the lay out of the preview screen can be selected.

The screen can be composed of a mosaic of for example 6 images pertaining to successively read out images, whereby a first read out image is no longer visualized when a new image is read out and displayed.

An alternative embodiment the preview screen shows a number of small visual images pertaining to successively read out radiation images.

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The visual images are arranged so that they remain visible when the identification screen is displayed on top of the preview screen or scrolled back to previous images.

Furthermore, Van De Velde fails to make up for the deficiencies of Buytaert. Therefore, independent claim 1, its dependent claims 2-7, and independent claim 8 are allowable over the prior art.

With further regard to claim 3, Applicant submits that Buytaert does not teach or suggest that the plurality of radiographic conditions of the radiation image capture information which are reserved as the single inspection are displayed in a single screen as tags, each corresponding to each of the plurality of radiographic conditions. The Examiner cites col. 3, lines 33-44 as allegedly disclosing this feature of claim 3, but Applicant disagrees. The cited excerpt discloses that “reduced image signals representing reduced images comprising less pixels than the original radiation image, are deduced from the digital image representation of the radiation image and a composed signal representing a mosaic type image is formed by means of a number of the reduced image signals.” However, this disclosure does not describe displaying a plurality of radiographic conditions in a single screen as tags. Instead, Buytaert discloses displaying a mosaic of reduced images. Hence, claim 3 is allowable for this additional reason.

Regarding claim 4, Applicant submits that Buytaert fails to teach or suggest a thumbnail image of the radiation image is displayed in relation to a tag of the tags. Even if the reference discloses displaying images as thumbnail images, as asserted by the Examiner, the reduced images of the reference are not displayed in relation to a tag. Buytaert does not even disclose the use of tags. Thus, claim 4 is allowable based on this deficiency of the prior art as well.

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At least because of Buytaert's lack of a disclosure of tags, claims 5-7 are allowable over the prior art.

New claims 9-11 are added to further define the present invention. These new claims are allowable over the prior art, at least because of their dependence from claim 1.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

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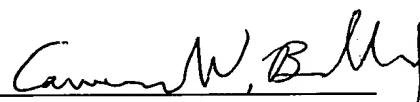
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Date: January 6, 2004